さくらDISCORD

2

EIJI MASUDA PRESENTS

増田英二

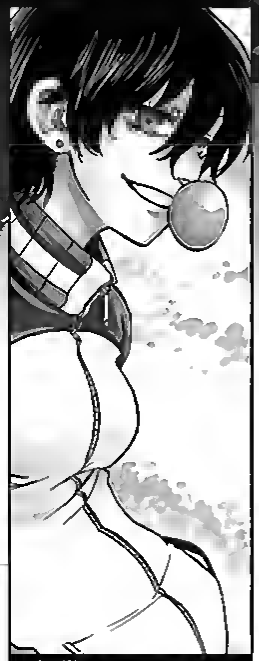
SHUEISHA JUMP COMICS

SHONEN CHAMPION COMICS
週刊少年チャンピオン掲載

さくら DISCORD 2

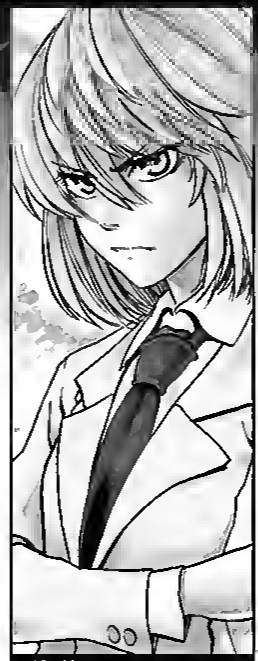
増田英二

さくらDISCORD
STORY & CHARACTER



芽吹さくら
通称 芽吹

普段は何事にも興味がなさそうだが、康介の真っ直ぐな態度にはからんでくる。『さくら』たちと行動を共にしているが!?



住吉さくら
通称 住吉

母親と弟の面倒を看ながらの生活で卓届になっていたが、一途に仲間に誘うノ宮と『さくら』たちに心を開いた。

桜ノ宮さくら
通称 ノ宮

いつも笑顔でみんなを照らす、元気娘。康介に感化され、勇気をだして住吉との友情を確認した。特技は水切り。

桜ケ丘奏
通称 丘

本ばかり読んでいるせいか、超一流の運動音痴。頭脳は明晰だが、やることが他人と微妙にズレていることも。

桜島結太
通称 島

性格明るく、色恋沙汰が好き。陸上部に所属していて、日々忙しく練習に励んでいるようだが!?

作楽康介
通称 康介

中学野球に挫折し、4年ぶりに故郷に帰ってきた。幼なじみのノ宮、島、丘と再会し、諦めない自分を取り戻した。

前巻のあらすじ

転校生・作楽康介をクラスで待っていたのは名前に『さくら』がつく男女だった。幼なじみのノ宮、島、丘と住吉、芽吹。球技大会のメンバーとなった彼らに、康介は練習参加を促すが、住吉さくらと対立してしまう。友情を否定し、頑に練習参加を拒む住吉。その理由はノ宮との過去のすれ違いにあった。それを理解した康介は、住吉とノ宮の友情を復活させることで、球技大会の練習に住吉を参加させ、『さくら』6人を集めようとして!?

さくらDISCORD（ディスコード）

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＊この作品はフィクションであり、実在の個人・団体等にはいっさい関係ありません。

YOU'RE STRONG AT THESE GAMES, NOMIYA!
UNLIKE MY SISTER!!
HA! HA! HA!
YOU CAN CALL ME MASTER, IF YOU WANT!
AND THIS FORMULA, YOU SEE...
I DON'T CARE, JUST TELL ME HOW TO SOLVE THE DAMN THING!
HEY, SUMI...
DO YOU HAVE SOME BOOZE?
CHAPTER 8: TEAM FORMED

ガヤ
...YEAH, LATELY YOU HAVE TO PAY A FEE TO MAKE A BARBECUE ON THE RIVER BANK.
ガヤ
...SORRY.
I DIDN'T EXPECT THEM TO GET THIS COMFY.
ガヤ
ガヤ
CHAPTER 8:-TEAM-FORMED

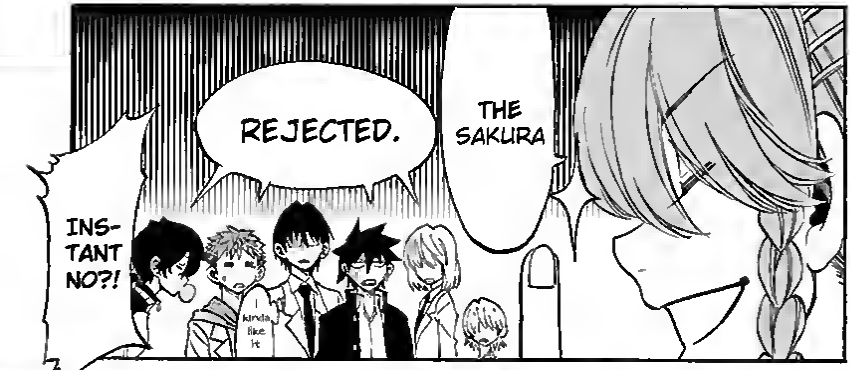
MY MOTHER?
NO, YOU DON'T REALLY NEED TO COME.
NOMIYA HAS ALREADY PAID HER A VISIT.
トントントン
..GEEZ, AND I TOLD HER TO TELL ME IF SHE WENT...
...
HEH.
IT SURE SOUNDS LIKE HER.
...IT WAS QUITE A SCENE. MY MOM SAID "TAKE CARE OF MY DAUGHTER."
THEN NOMIYA CRIED LIKE A LITTLE GIRL
AND REPLIED "I SWEAR I'LL MAKE HER HAPPY!!"
SERIOUSLY... I WONDERED IF SHE WANTED TO BE MY FRIEND OR MY WIFE, FOR A SECOND.
...NOMIYA AND I HAVE MADE UP NOW, SO YOU CAN RELAX.
NOW THAT ALL IS SET UP...

LET'S GO TO THE SPORTS GROUNDS RIGHT NOW.
.....
SUMI... YOSHI ...?

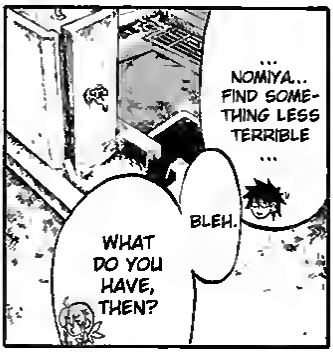
... NOMIYA TOLD ME ABOUT YOU.
YOU WANT TO WIN THIS TOURNAMENT, RIGHT?
AND IT'S ALREADY TOMORROW.
TAKAKI, GET READY.
AH...
YES!
HEY.. SUMIYOSHI, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL...
I'VE ALREADY TOLD THEM I COULDN'T COME.
BUT I MEAN... I TOLD YOU, RIGHT?
JUST SPENDING TIME TOGETHER IS ENOUGH OF A TRAINING...
IT'S COOL AND ALL, BUT WE STILL HAVE TO TRAIN WITH ACTUAL BASEBALL TOOLS, WHATEVER YOU SAY.
..."ALL TOGETHER", AS YOU WISHED.

...I'M REALLY GRATEFUL TO YOU, YOU KNOW?
...COME ON, LET ME AT LEAST DO THIS FOR YOU,
SAKURA KOU-SUKE.
COME ON, KOU-CHAN, LET'S GO!!
NO... NOMI-YA?!
HEY... WAIT!!
S... SO WHAT'S WRONG WITH HELPING YOU TO WIN?
NO ONE'S GONNA BLAME ME, RIGHT?!

BY THE WAY.
WE SHOULD NAME OUR TEAM, SHOULD-N'T WE?
..NAME OUR TEAM?
SINCE WE'RE SIX "SAKURAS" ...
I'VE COME UP WITH THE PERFECT NAME!!


THE SAKURA
REJECTED.
INS-TANT NO?!
I kinda like it

TEAM SOAKING WET.
...'THE HELL IS THAT?
WELL, IT SEEMS YOU ALL HATE STAYING DRY, SO, Y'KNOW.


...NOMIYA... FIND SOME-THING LESS TERRIBLE ...
BLEH.
WHAT DO YOU HAVE, THEN?

THE ☆ SAKURA
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A THING, THERE!
……
"SAKURA DISCORD"
"DIS-CORD" …
A DISSO-NANCE, IF YOU WILL.
OKA?
……

IT'S PERFECTLY FINE THAT OUR BELIEFS DON'T COINCIDE.
WE CAN JUST LET THEM COLLIDE WITH EACH OTHER IN A CACOPHONY...
SO THAT, ONE DAY, THEY PLAY A HARMONIOUS MELODY ...!!
...LIKE KOUSUKE SAID LAST TIME... WE CAN LAUGH WHILE SHOWING EACH OTHER HOW MUCH WE SUCK... AND FIGHT SOMETIMES.
AND THAT IS WHAT'S REALLY PRECIOUS.
SO IT GAVE ME THE IDEA OF THIS NAME, "SAKURA DISCORD".
... OKA ...

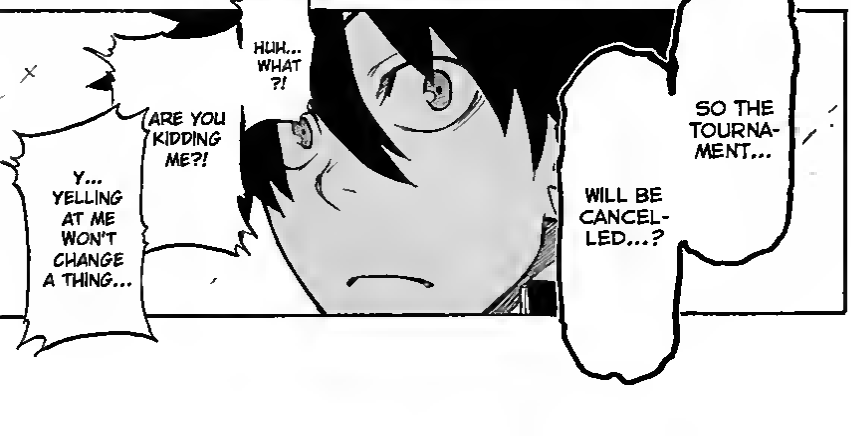
HUUUU-UUUH?!
"TEAM RATTLE"
DO WE EVEN NEED A TEAM NAME IN THE FIRST PLACE?
MEH DOESN'T REALLY SOUNDS LIKE A TEAM NAME, SO I'LL PASS.
!?
.....
SUMI-YOSHI IS STIFF AS AL-WAYS...
YEAH, YEAH, LET'S START THE BLOODY TRAINING, ALREADY.
THANK YOU, SHIMA ...
ERR, I PERSO-NALLY LIKE IT, OKA!!
BUT SOMETIMES, THAT'S JUST NOT ENOUGH.
..STILL, IT'S STRANGE...
I THINK I ALREADY DID THE MAXIMUM I COULD.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T INTEND TO GIVE IT MY ALL TO WIN.
THERE'S JUST NO WAY WE CAN WIN, TOMORROW
...I'M SORRY, SUMIYOSHI, BUT..

...THERE'S ONE THING I NEVER QUITE UNDERSTOOD.

I THINK I GOT A GLIMPSE OF THE ANSWER.
HOWEVER, NOW...
YEAH RIGHT, YOU JUST WANT TO SKIP, DON'T YOU?
YOU STILL HAVE A WAY TO GO, KOU-SUKE.
PLAYING AROUND IS ALSO PART OF THE TRAI-NING, YOU KNOW?
"THE MAIN TRAINING IS THE TIME SPENT TO-GETHER."
Skish! Skish! Your legs, your legs!
My legs what?!
How... And... am I supposed to watch a sky ball?!
I COULD NEVER HAVE SAID THAT A FEW MONTHS AGO.
HAHA...

BAD NEWS!!
SHIMA?
KO...
KOU-SUKE!!

A SPRING STORM WITH A 100% PROBABILITY OF RAIN-FALL, THEY SAY...
TOMORROW... IT'S GONNA RAIN CATS AND DOGS...


HUH... WHAT?!
ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!
Y... YELLING AT ME WON'T CHANGE A THING...
SO THE TOURNA-MENT...
WILL BE CANCEL-LED...?

HEH... HEHE... HAHA- HAHA...
KOU- SUKE ...?
KO ...
... PFF ...
HAHA- HAHAHA- HAHA!!
'THE HELL IS THAT, SERI- OUSLY!
WHO ?!
ERR ... ARE YOU AL- RIGHT ?!

...SENPAI WAS DAMN RIGHT.
I REALLY HAVE A RIDICULOUSLY LONG WAY TO GO.
Kou-suke's broken again...
Wasn't he from the start, though?
Me-suki...
You know...
IT SURE TOOK ME AGES
TO FIGURE OUT SOMETHING SO SIMPLE.
.....
YOU'RE NOT MAD, KOU-CHAN?
.....
...OH NO.
I ALREADY HAVE A NEW GOAL, NOW.
SO...
IN THE END...

WE DID AGHIEVE IT.
IT'S ENOUGH FOR ME.
IT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH ...!!

BUT...

IN THE END
I JUST LOVED TO SPEND TIME WITH ALL OF THEM
WHAT REALLY MATTERED WASN'T THE CLUB, OR WINNING MATCHES
YEAH... ALL THIS TIME SENPAI REACHED OUT HIS HAND WHILE SAYING "ONE MORE STEP"
THE "VICTORY" HE WAS TALKING ABOUT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN WHAT I HAD IMAGINED

THANK YOU ALL...
FOR STICKING WITH ME ...!!
...I STILL HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN.
IF I HADN'T TAKEN THAT "EXTRA STEP"...
I WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED NOMIYA'S WOUNDS...
SUMIYOSHI'S KINDNESS, THAT COULD HEAL THEM...
OR EVEN MY ACTUAL FEELINGS.
I GUESS I DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING YET..
ABOUT SHIMA
ABOUT OKA
AND ALSO MEBUKI.

AS THE DAY OUR FRAGMENTED TALE STARTED
THAT'S WHY I WANT TO KNOW MORE
...THAT'S THE NEW GOAL I'VE QUITELY DECIDED TO STRIVE FOR
SO "THE♡ SAKURA" IS FULLY FORMED NOW.
YEP!!
...WE TOLD YOU THAT NAME WAS REJECTED, STUPID.
HUUUH? YOU HAVE WEIRD TASTES, KOU-CHAN.
LATER, I WANNA REMEMBER THIS DAY
BY THE WAY ...
WEREN'T YOU CRYING, JUST NOW?
HUH ?!
I... I JUST LAUGHED MYSELF TO TEARS, THAT'S ALL!
THE TALE OF THE SIX "SAKURAS"...
...OR RATHER .

OF "SAKURA DISCORD"... WAS IT?
!!

SORRY!
I HAVE MY CLUB ACTIVITIES AGAIN.

AGAIN?
IT HAPPENS OFTEN LATELY, DOESN'T IT?
SHIMA-KOU.
WE'RE AT SHISHI'S PLACE UNTIL 7PM, SO COME IF YOU CAN!!
WHICH MEANS YOU'RE GONNA HANG OUT THAT LATE AGAIN...
I don't mind, but still

..IT SEEMS SHIMAKOU IS THE ACE OF THE TRACK TEAM.
SO HE HAS TO TRAIN HARDER THAN ANYONE!!
OH...
HE SURE DOESN'T SPARE HIS EFFORTS.

Chapter 9: Something I shouldn't say

コツ
コツ
コツ
イ…イ…
…
HEY.
I DON'T SEE YOU HERE OFTEN.

KOU-SUKE.
I JUST ASKED SUMIYOSHI WHERE YOU WERE.
SHE SAID YOU MIGHT BE UP HERE.
...I MEAN, YOU HAVEN'T SHOWN UP AT HER PLACE, LATELY.
SO I WONDERED IF YOU WERE ALRIGHT.
HM? WHAT, I KEPT MY PROMISE, DIDN'T I?
"IF SUMI PARTICIPATES, I'LL JOIN YOU IN YOUR TRAINING".
BUT THE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT WAS CANCELLED...
SO IT'S MEANINGLESS NOW, ISN'T IT?
YEAH, I GUESS SO...
SO I'M JUST HERE OUT OF PERSONNAL CURIOSITY.

AMONG ALL THE SAKURAS,
YOU'RE THE ONE I KNOW THE LEAST ABOUT.
SO I WAS LOOKING FOR AN OCCASION TO CHAT WITH YOU A BIT.

MIYA...
AND, ERR ...
OKA AND SHIMA, WAS IT?
Here
Thanks
... WELL, WHATEVER.
YOU PICKED MY INTEREST TOO, ACTUALLY.

WERE YOU, NOW ...
YOU'RE A CURIOUS ONE, INDEED...

Hmpf
THOUGH BEFORE TALKING TO ME...
I THINK SOMEONE ELSE SHOULD COME FIRST...

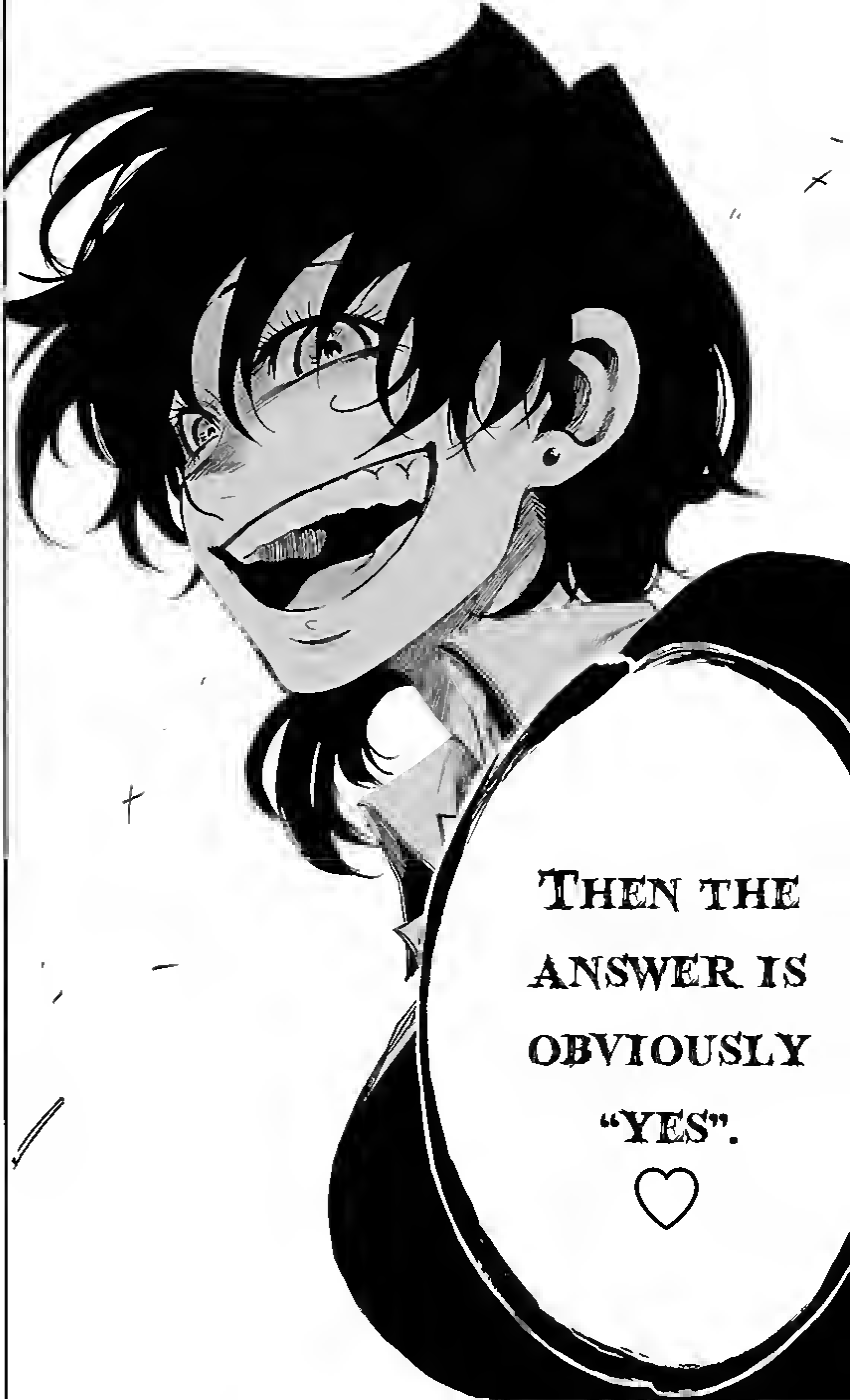
YOU WERE WITH THEM IN GRADE SCHOOL, WEREN'T YOU?
SO YOU'RE LIKE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS OR SOMETHING?
YEAH, ALTHOUGH I DIDN'T CONTACT THEM AT ALL DURING THE FOUR YEARS I WAS AWAY.
!
IT'S BEEN FOUR WHOLE YEARS?
I GUESS YOU'RE PRETTY MUCH DIFFERENT PEOPLE TO EACH OTHER, NOW.
HMM ...
YOU COULD SAY THAT ...
HONESTLY, THE PASSAGE OF TIME HIT ME HARD A FEW TIMES.
WE DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO EACH OTHER DURING THIS GAP.
BUT WELL ...

NOT THAT MUCH HAS CHANGED IN THE END.
I STILL SEE THEM AS MY PALS.
AND EVEN IF WE HAD CHANGED...
WE WOULD JUST HAVE TO START OVER AS "DIFFERENT PEOPLE".
...HA HA HA...
NO WONDER YOU GOT PISSED AT SUMI WHEN SHE CALLED THAT A "FARCE".
YEP...
THE BLOOD SURE RUSHED TO MY HEAD...
YOU SAID "FARCE", DIDN'T YOU?
TAKE THAT BACK.

SAY...
HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TOLD THAT ...
"YOU CAN ALWAYS START OVER"?
.....
MEBU-KI?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
CAN SO-METHING ALREADY OVER...
SOME-THING ALREADY BROKEN ...
TRULY BE REBUILT FROM SCRATCH?

IT SEEMS SUMI AND MIYA MANAGED TO RECREATE THEIR BOND...
BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU, I WONDER?
I WOULD BE CURIOUS TO KNOW.
アアア
... MEBUKI, WHAT ...
DO YOU WANT TO SAY...?
RIGHT ...
BEFORE TELLING YOU THE REST...

HOW ABOUT WE ASK SUMI, OVER THERE, TO JOIN US?
!!
SUMI-YOSH!
?
.....
HE HE HE...
YES, YES...
IF YOU ASK WHETHER I'M GONNA SAY SOMETHING I SHOULDN'T...


THEN THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUSLY "YES".
♡

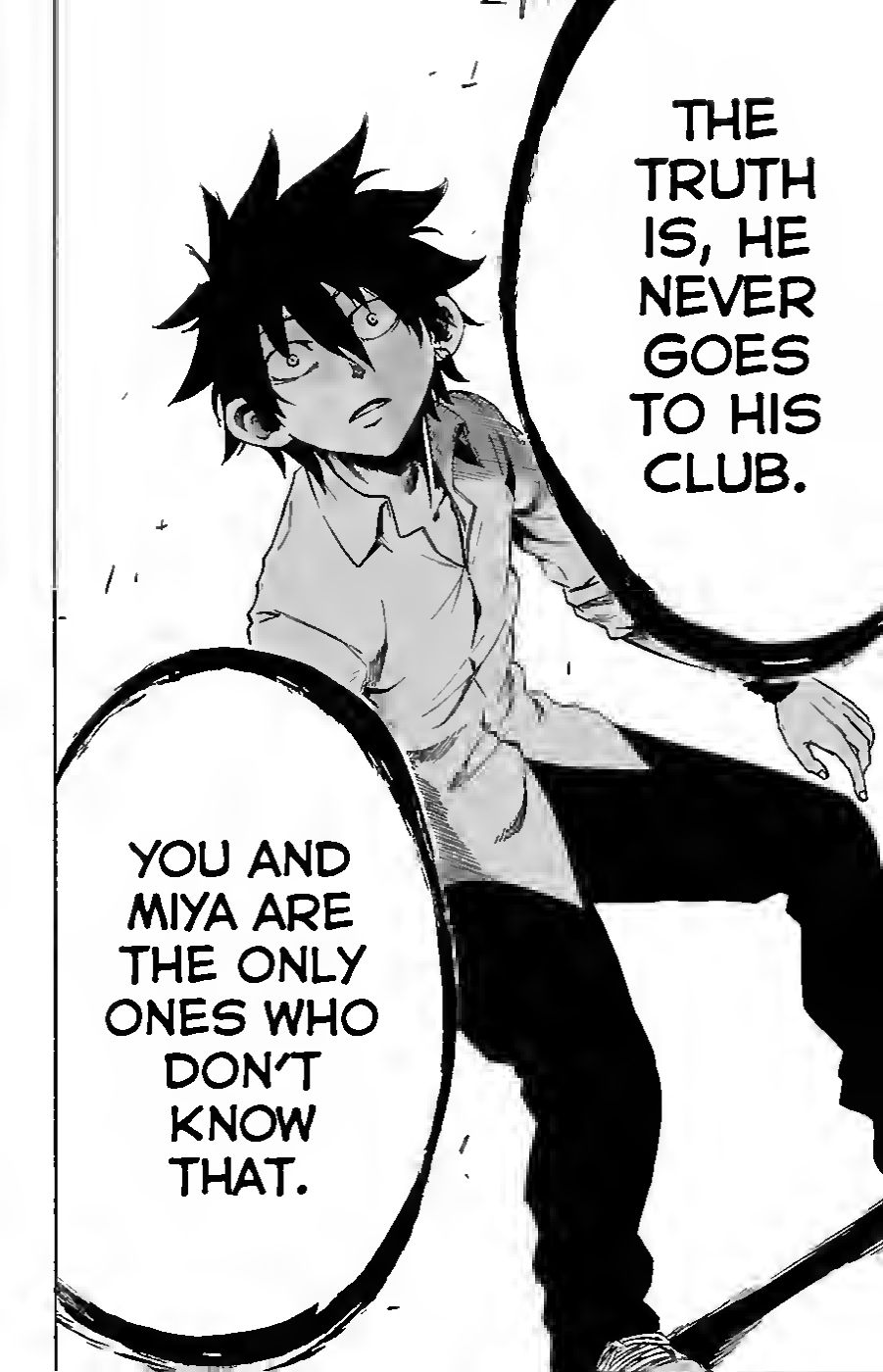
HEY, KOUSUKE, I'VE GOT SOME INFO FOR YOU...
ABOUT THE "FARCE" SUMI WAS TALKING ABOUT.
MEBUKI!! SHUT YOUR...

!!
COME ON, SUMI ...
WAIT A LITTLE, WILL YOU?
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M NOT DONE TALKING?

ME-
BUKI
!!
WHAT
THE
HELL
ARE
YOU...
!!

GUH !!
HEY, HEY, EASY THERE.
JUST LISTEN TO ME, OKAY?
...WHAT'S ON WITH YOU, SERIOUSLY?!
HERE, I'M LISTENING!
SO LET GO OF SUMIYOSHI ...
THE WORD "FARCE" THAT IRRITATED YOU SO MUCH...

WASN'T MEANT TO KEEP MIYA AWAY.
SA-KURA KOU-SUKE!
DON'T LISTEN TO HER!!
IT WAS ABOUT SAKU-RAJIMA YUUTA ...
...SHIMA ...?
WHY DO YOU BRING HIM UP ...?
HE'S ALWAYS USING HIS "CLUB AC-TIVITIES" AS AN EXCUSE, BUT...


THE TRUTH IS, HE NEVER GOES TO HIS CLUB.
YOU AND MIYA ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO DON'T KNOW THAT.

IT REALLY WAS A MAGNIFICENT "FARCE"!!
SHIMA, WHO TOLD LIE AFTER LIE.
YOU AND MIYA WHO KNEW NOTHING, OKA WHO PLAYED ALONG, AND SUMI WHO KEPT QUIET ...
...SHIMA
WHY DON'T YOU COME AT SUMIYOSHI'S PLACE?
SHE AND NOMIYA ARE WAITING, AND SO IS KOUSUKE.
WHY, YOU ASK?
AS IF YOU DIDN'T ALREADY KNOW...

IT'S PRECI-SELY...
BECAUSE KOUSUKE IS THERE THAT I WON'T GO ...!!

HMM ...
WHERE HAVE KOU-CHAN AND SHISHI GONE?
CHAPTER 10: LIE
ERR... NOMIYA!
I HAVE TO GO...
AH, YEAH, I KNOW.
YOUR CLUB, RIGHT?
YEAH ...
SOR-RY.
COME ON, DON'T APO-LOGIZE!
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH WORKING HARD!!

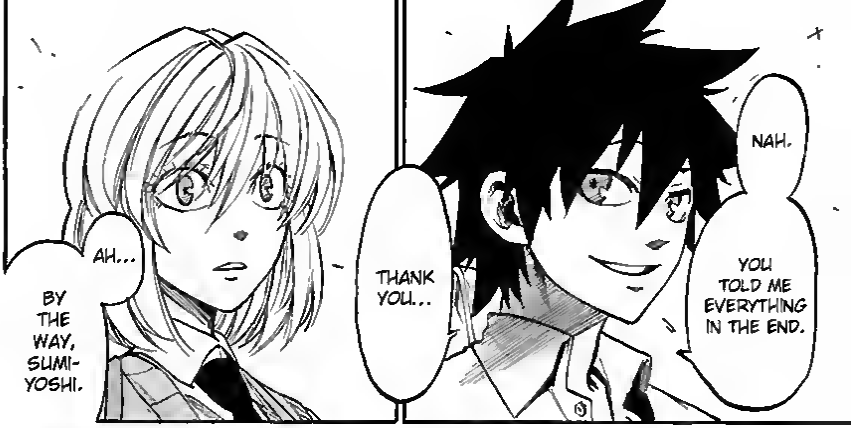
I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT TOURNAMENTS AND STUFF ...
BUT WHEN YOU KNOW THE SCHEDULE, PLEASE TELL ME!
I'LL DEFINITELY COME TO CHEER YOU ON!!
CHAPTER 10: LIE

...
I WENT TO CHECK AT THE TRACK CLUB.
THEY SAY THAT SAKURAJIMA YUUTA IS A GHOST MEMBER..
THEY DON'T EVEN INCLUDE HIS NAME FOR TOURNAMENTS ANYMORE...
...EXACTLY...
...SINCE HE ENTERED HIGHSCHOOL, SHIMA...
HAS USED HIS "CLUB ACTIVITIES" EXCUSE TO REFUSE NOMIYA'S INVITATIONS MORE AND MORE OFTEN.
AS MEBUKI SAID.
HOWEVER..

I OVER-HEARD IT ONE DAY.
HEY, SAKURA-JIMA!!
EITHER YOU COME TO THE CLUB OR YOU QUIT, BUT MAKE UP YOUR MIND!!
TOMORROW... I'LL COME TOMORROW, DON'T WOR-RY!!
THAT'S ALSO WHAT YOU SAID LAST TIME!!

ALL THAT WAS JUST A LIE.
HE LIED TO NOMIYA
TO KEEP HIS DISTANCE WITH HER.

I WASN'T IN ANY POSITION TO CALL HIM OUT.
...BUT CONSIDERING I HAD PUSHED HER AWAY TOO...
SO... SORRY, I HAVE MY CLUB TODAY.
HMM...
I SEE.
YET, AS SOON AS YOU TRANS-FERED IN HERE...
OR MAYBE AS SOON AS YOU CAME BACK TO THIS TOWN...
HE STARTED TO TALK WITH NOMIYA AGAIN, AS IF NOTHING HAPPENED.
AND I THOUGHT "WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?" ...
...AND THAT WAS...
THE "FARCE", RIGHT ...?
YEAH, ABOUT THAT...
I'M REALLY SORRY ...
HM?


NAH.
YOU TOLD ME EVERYTHING IN THE END.
THANK YOU...
AH...
BY THE WAY, SUMI-YOSHI.

DO YOU KNOW WHY SHIMA WOULD LIE?
I MEAN... I'M SURE HE HAS HIS REA-SONS...
UH ...?
AH... RIGHT ...
SORRY, BUT I'M JUST AS CLUELESS AS... YOU...

.....

SUMIYOSHI?

.....
SHIMA ...?
... ERR ...
I HAD FOR-GOTTEN SOME-THING!!
YOU KNOW, FOR THE CLUB...
SO I WENT BACK TO PICK IT UP!

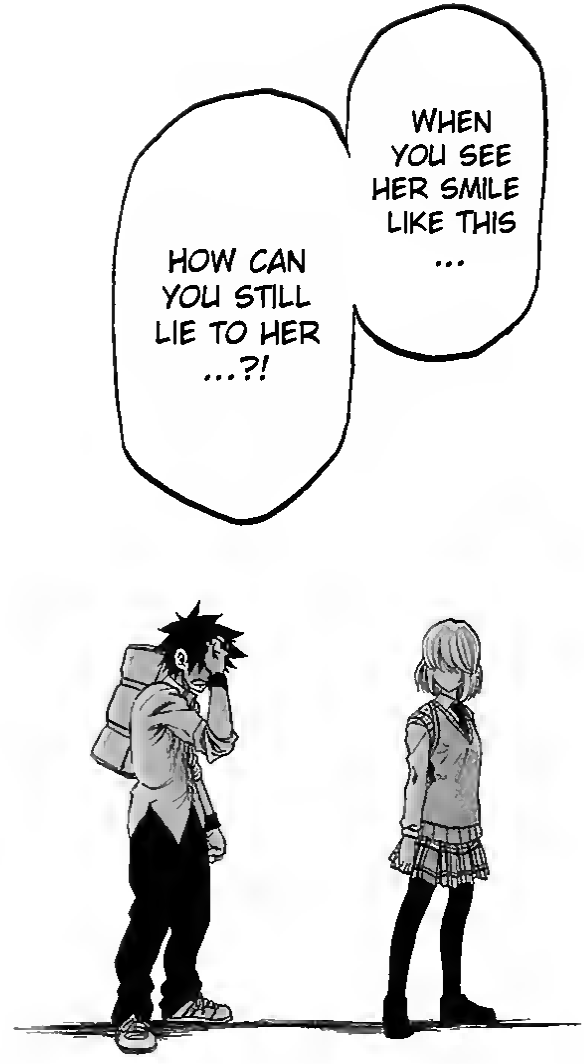
ERR...
I'M IN A HURRY, SO...
S...
SEE YA!
WHAT... HEY...
SHIMA ...?
SHIMA ...
HEY, SHIMA !!
!?
!!
WAIT, SAKURA KOUSUKE!!
WHY ARE YOU STOPPING ME?!
SUMI-YO...
OH, THERE YOU ARE, KOU-CHAN, SHISHI!!

WERE YOU SKIPPING STONES?
WHAT'S UP?
THEN LET ME...
...HUH?
NOMIYA ...
OKA..
WE CAN'T GET INTO YOUR HOUSE IF YOU'RE NOT THERE, NOW CAN WE?
WE WERE LOOKING FOR YOU!
ISN'T THAT SHIMAKOU?
WHA... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, NOMIYA?!
SHIMA HAS HIS CLUB ACTIVITIES, DOESN'T HE?!
AH!
MAYBE IT'S WHAT HE WAS TELLING ME?

"I'M DOING A SECRET TRAINING FOR THE NEXT TOURNAMENT."
"SO IF YOU DON'T SEE ME AT THE CLUB, THAT'S WHAT I'M DOING."
SHIMA?
AH... YOU MEAN SAKURAJIMA?
WE'VE STOPPED REGISTERING HIM FOR TOURNAMENTS.
HE HASN'T COME FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS.
...SHIMAKOU HAS ALWAYS HAD A MENIAL SIDE TO HIM, RIGHT?
YOU KNOW, LIKE HE TOTALLY LACKS SELF-CONFIDENCE ...

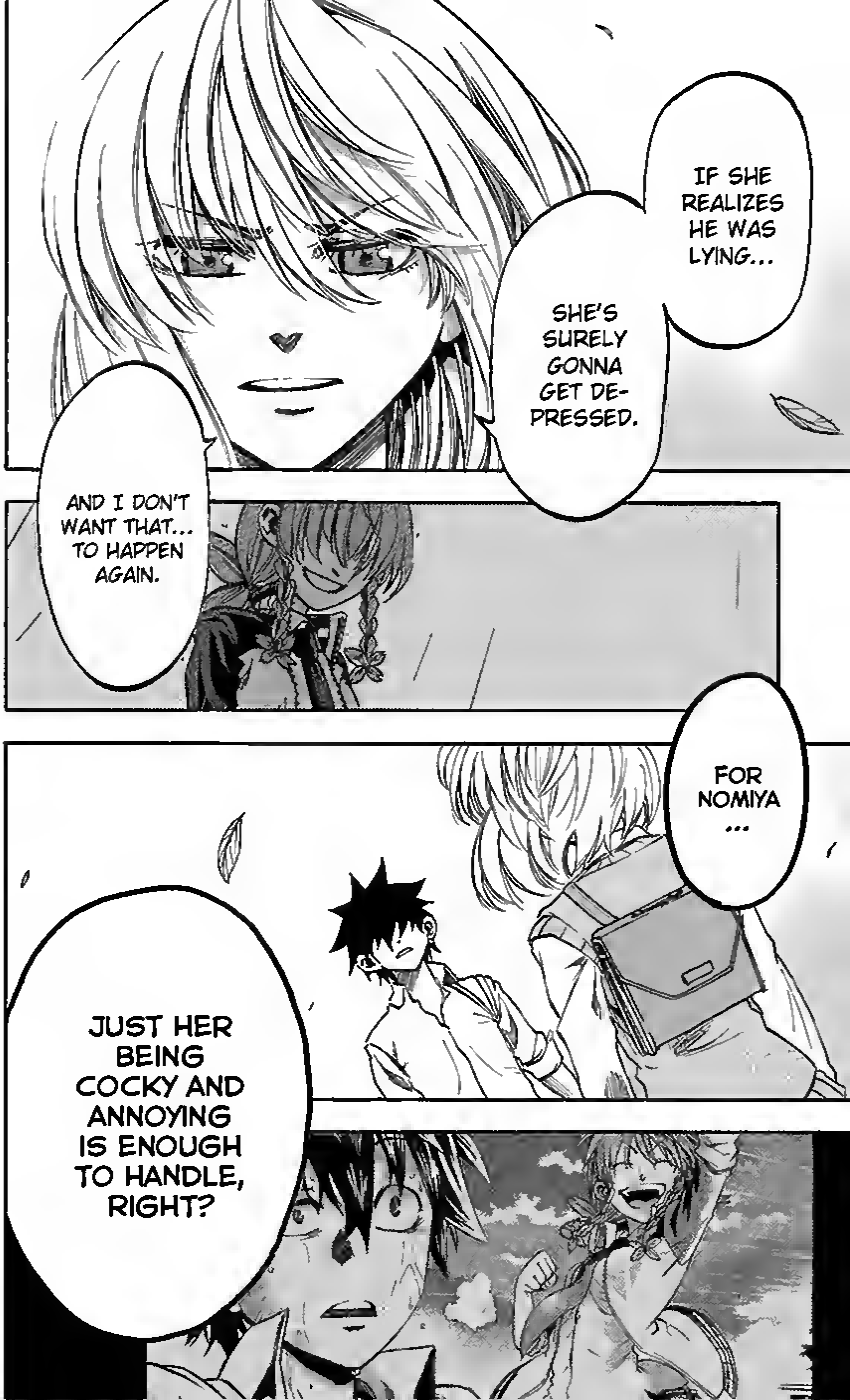
SO YOU SEE, I WAS SUPER HAPPY
TO LEARN THAT HE COULD GET SO MOTIVATED.
IT'S GOOD FOR HIM, I THINK.

NO... NOMI-YA!!
?
WHAT'S UP, KOU-CHAN?
TAKAKI MUST BE BACK BY NOW, SO THE HOUSE SHOULD BE OPEN.
YOU CAN GO AHEAD!!
HUH? WHY CAN'T WE JUST GO TOGETHER?
AH...
OH, I GET IT, SORRY! GOOD LUCK, SHISHI!!
... HUH ?
YOU'RE VERY FITTING FOR EACH OTHER, IF YOU ASK ME!!
COME ON, OKAPYON, WE'RE IN THE WAY, LET'S GO!!
HUH... HEY, NOMIYA!! WHAT ARE YOU...
TAKE YOUR TIME, YOU TWO ♪
... GEEZ.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER ...
...WHY, SHIMA?
NOMIYA IS GENUINELY REJOYCING FOR YOU ...!!


WHEN YOU SEE HER SMILE LIKE THIS ...
HOW CAN YOU STILL LIE TO HER ...?!

IT SEEMS THAT FOUR YEARS
IS A MUCH LONGER TIME THAN I THOUGHT...
WHEN I CAME BACK TO THIS TOWN
AND MET AGAIN WITH ALL OF THEM...
I REALLY THOUGHT THAT THEY HADN'T CHANGED THAT MUCH
BUT...
...I'LL HELP YOU.
I MEAN ...

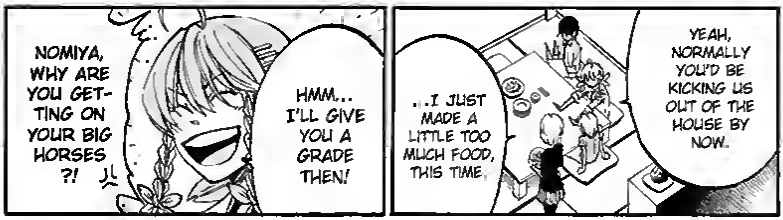
SUMI-YOSHI ...?
...I HAD STARTED TO THINK THAT IF WE COULD JUST HIDE SHIMA'S LIE TO HER..
THEN YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO GET ALONG.
BUT AT THIS RATE ...
NOMIYA IS GONNA FIND OUT SOONER OR LATER.
ABOUT SHIMA, AND ABOUT YOU ALL.
PLEASE LET ME HELP YOU.


IF SHE REALIZES HE WAS LYING...
SHE'S SURELY GONNA GET DE-PRESSED.
AND I DON'T WANT THAT... TO HAPPEN AGAIN.
FOR NOMIYA ...
JUST HER BEING COCKY AND ANNOYING IS ENOUGH TO HANDLE, RIGHT?

NEIGHTER I NOR SUMIYOSHI...

CAN STAND SEEING NOMIYA DEJECTED.

ALRIGHT, IT'S TIME
TO JOIN OUR FORCES FOR A BIT!!



CHAPTER 11: I HATE YOU

CHAPTER 11: I HATE YOU

COULD YOU BE...
HUH ...
YES, WHO IS IT?
UWAH! KOUSUKE?! IS THAT YOU?!
SO YOU REALLY DID COME BACK!
... AND YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT, MA'AM.
YOU HAVEN'T GROWN UP AT ALL EITHER!!
Though Yuuta's short too
EVER HEARD OF MILK?!
AHEM.. IS SHIMA HERE?
YUU-TA?
SACHI-KO! IS YUUTA HERE?
HM?
WHAT, YOUR PRODIGAL SON?
YEAH, THE THING THAT SERVES AS YOUR BROTHER!!
WOMEN SURE ARE TOUGH IN THIS HOUSE.
I pity the son and the dad

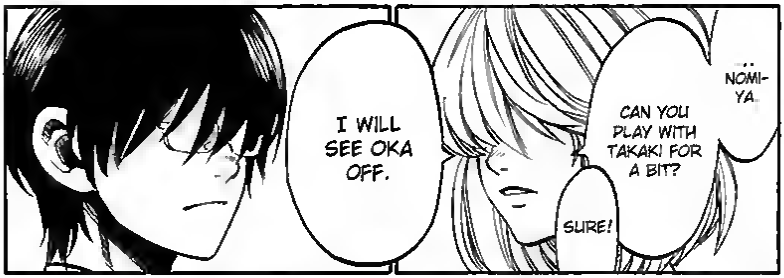
I'M PRETTY SURE YUUTA WENT OFF TO RUN SOMEWHERE.
WHAT, AGAIN?
WHAT IS HE SO FIRED UP ABOUT, SERIOUSLY ...
SHIMA... DON'T TELL ME...
I WENT TO CHECK AT THE TRACK CLUB.
THEY SAY THAT SAKURAJIMA YUUTA IS A GHOST MEMBER
YOU EVEN LIE TO YOUR FAMILY.?
WHY IS THE GHOST MEMBER OF THE TRACK TEAM RUNNING AROUND SO LATE AT NIGHT?
HE REALLY DOESN'T KNOW WHAT HE WANTS.
DAMN RIGHT.
HE SHOULD JUST GO BACK TO THE CLUB, ALREADY!!

HUH?
WAIT, MOM?! IS THAT KOUSUKE?!
WOW, IT'S REALLY HIM!! YOU'VE GOTTEN HUGE, BUT YOU'RE STILL A MIDGET!!
KOUSUKE!! YUUTA MUST BE RUNNING EITHER ALONG THE RIVERBANK OR AT NAGISA PARK.
HE SHOULD STAY AROUND THERE FOR ANOTHER HOUR OR SO.
PWEH ...
I'M FULL, I'M FULL!!

GOD... AND TO THINK THREE PEOPLE MISSED THAT GODLY MEAL.
Taha...
KOU-CHAN, SHIMAKOU AND BUKKI JUST WASTED HALF OF THEIR LIVES!!
THEY SURE DID.
... YEAH, YEAH, WHATEVER.
JUST GIVE ME YOUR GRADE, WILL YOU?
MY GRADE? WHAT'S THAT ABOUT, SHISHI?
NOMIYA !!
WHY DO YOU THINK I WAS SO ANXIOUS WHILE YOU WERE STUFFING YOURSELF?!
A PITY NOT EVERYONE COULD COME!!
...THE SCHEDULES OF 6 PEOPLE DON'T MATCH THAT EASILY.
SAY, WHAT'S BUKKI DOING?
ME-BUKI ?
...THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.

MAYBE WE WON'T EVER BE TOGETHER AGAIN?
MAYBE WE'LL SLOWLY DRIFT AWAY FROM EACH OTHER..
KOU-CHAN HAD SOMETHING TO DO AND SHIMAKOU HAD HIS CLUB.
WE HAVEN'T REALLY HAD A CHANCE TO GATHER SINCE THE TRAINING.
NOMIYA?
NOMIYA.
IT'S FINE.
EVERYTHING WILL BE ALRIGHT.

NOMIYA, SUMI-YOSHI.
SORRY, BUT I HAVE TO TAKE MY LEAVE.
AH, YEAH.
LATER, OKA-PYON
.....
SHISHI?


I WILL SEE OKA OFF.
.. NOMI-YA.
CAN YOU PLAY WITH TAKAKI FOR A BIT?
SURE!

...SAY, OKA...
ARE YOU GOING TO SEE SHIMA TOO?

... RIGHT.
YOU ALSO KNEW ABOUT IT, DIDN'T YOU.
JUST ANSWER ME.
ARE YOU REALLY FINE, LEAVING THINGS AS THEY ARE?
... SORRY.
I NEED A BIT MORE TIME.
BUT I OBVIOUSLY DON'T THINK THE CURRENT SITUATION IS HEALTHY.
AND, YOU KNOW ...

SHIMA DOESN'T EITHER.
... DAMN ...
THAT'S .. STILL NOT ENOUGH...
... SO YOU REALLY WERE RUNNING AROUND.
SHIMA.
KOU... SUKE...?
I ASKED YOUR FAMILY.
AND INDEED, HERE YOU ARE.

!
Y... YEAH, IT'S FOR THE TOURNAMENT.
GEEZ, AND I TOLD HER TO KEEP THAT A SECRET...
THAT YOU WERE TRAINING IN SECRET FOR A TOURNAMENT.
...NOMIYA TOLD ME
ERR.
THEY DIDN'T TALK TOO MUCH, I HOPE?
MY BIG SIS, ESPECIALLY ...
SAY, SHIMA...
WHY ARE YOU LYING LIKE THIS?

...AT FIRST I THOUGHT THAT YOU WERE SKIPPING THE CLUB, PLAIN AND SIMPLE.
BUT I FIND YOU HERE, RUNNING YOUR DAMNEDEST...

I DON'T HAVE A CLUE EITHER.
I DON'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT YOU'RE ...
OKAY.. WHAT KIND OF JOKE IS THAT, KOUSUKE?
HAHA!

THERE'S NO WAY YOU DON'T KNOW THAT.
BUT IF IT'S NOT FOR A TOURNAMENT, THEN WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS AND LYING?
THE PEOPLE AT THE CLUB
TOLD ME THAT YOU WERE NO LONGER REGISTERED FOR THE TOURNA-MENTS.

SHIMA?
YOU SAID YOU EVEN ASKED MY FAMILY...?
RIGHT...
HUH...
"THE PEOPLE AT THE CLUB TOLD YOU"...?
WHY, SINCE I KEEP LYING?!
WHY WOULD YOU TRUST ME, ANYWAY?!
THAT'S NO SURPRISE, HUH.
YEAH, OF COURSE YOU DON'T TRUST ME...!!

!
...SHIMA, WHAT...!
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
IT'S ALL A BIG FAT LIE!!
THE CLUB, THE TOURNA-MENT, EVERY-THING...
IT PISSES YOU OFF, RIGHT?! I'M HERE, TELLING STUPID LIES...
STAYING QUIET AND KEEPING MY DIS-TANCE WITH YOU ALL...
...SHI-MA.
NOMIYA WAS OVER-JOYED
WHEN SHE SAW YOU COULD GIVE YOUR BEST.

I'M SURE YOU HAVE A GOOD REASON
FOR LYING BOLDLY TO HER FACE, RIGHT...?
IF IT'S A WORTH-LESS REASON ...
THEN I'M NOT GONNA LET IT PASS ...!!
YEAH.
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS.
YOU'D NEVER DESPISE SOMEONE WITHOUT KNOWING WHY.
AND THAT'S WHY..
YOU'RE ALWAYS TRYING TO REASON THINGS OUT.
...YOU CAN'T UNDER-STAND, KOUSUKE ...

WHAT KIND OF FEELINGS
LED ME TO TELL ALL THESE LIES, YOU ASK...?!
COME ON!! ARE YOU MAD YET?!
WHY DON'T YOU HAUGHTILY LECTURE ME?!
OR...
COULDN'T POSSIBLY UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL!!
A SPLENDID GUY LIKE YOU...
SOMEONE LIKE YOU, WHO'S AL-WAYS IN THE RIGHT ...
I HATE YOU MORE THAN ANYONE!!

...IS THAT SO.

TH...
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I HATE ABOUT YOU!!
I SEE.
SORRY 'BOUT THAT.
...I'D LIKE TO UNDERS-TAND YOU, YOU KNOW.
SO DO YOU MIND IF I WAIT FOR YOU?
...!
AT THE TRIANGLE PARK... WE USED TO PLAY THERE A LOT, RIGHT?
YOU CAN MEET ME THERE AND TELL ME A BIT MORE ABOUT YOU.
YOU CAN'T UNDER-STAND
AND IT WOULD BE A PROBLEM IF YOU UN-DERSTOOD
A HUNDRED... A THOU-SAND...
TEN THOUSAND TIMES I'VE WONDERED...

WHY THE ONE WALKING BY NOMIYA'S SIDE
WAS YOU, AND NOT ME.

CHAPTER 12: FIRST LOVE

...I'D LIKE TO UNDERSTAND YOU, YOU KNOW.
SO DO YOU MIND IF I WAIT FOR YOU?
YOU CAN TELL ME A BIT MORE ABOUT YOU.
... DAMN YOU, KOUSUKE ...
THAT HURT MUCH MORE THAN A PUNCH IN THE FACE ...!!
HE SAID TO YOUR FACE THAT HE HATED YOU...
AND YOU STILL CALL HIM YOUR FRIEND?
CHAPTER 12:
FIRST LOVE
...HOW ABOUT YOUR SHUT IT, MEBUKI?
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO BAD-MOUTH MY PAL ...!!
... GEEZ... REALLY NOBLE.

IT'S ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THIS.
THE NICER KOUSUKE WAS...
THE MORE THESE DARK FEELINGS WOULD SPREAD INSIDE ME.
SHE WAS MY FIRST LOVE.
WAS IT BECAUSE HE HAD MET WITH HER FIRST?
BECAUSE HIS HOUSE WAS CLOSER?
OR BECAUSE HE WAS JUST
A BETTER PERSON THAN I WAS?

...A DUEL?
JUST..
JUST ONCE...
KO... KOUSUKE !!
SHIMA ?
ERR.. WELL ...
YOU MEAN, RIGHT NOW?
AND THE FIRST ONE TO REACH NAGISA PARK WINS!! HOW ABOUT IT?!
WE'RE GONNA RUN ALONGSIDE THE RIVER-BANK...
ONLY ONCE, I WANTED..
HUH ?!
OKAY, I'LL DO IT!!
KOU-CHAN! KOU-CHAN!
WAIT UNTIL AFTER YOU'VE LOST TO THINK UP EXCUSES!!

TO BE BETTER
THAN KOUSUKE.
READY...
GO!!
ONLY ONCE ...
I WANTED...
ONLY THAT ONCE ...

GOAL!!
TO SHINE IN FRONT OF HER...

YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD, SHIMA-KOU!!

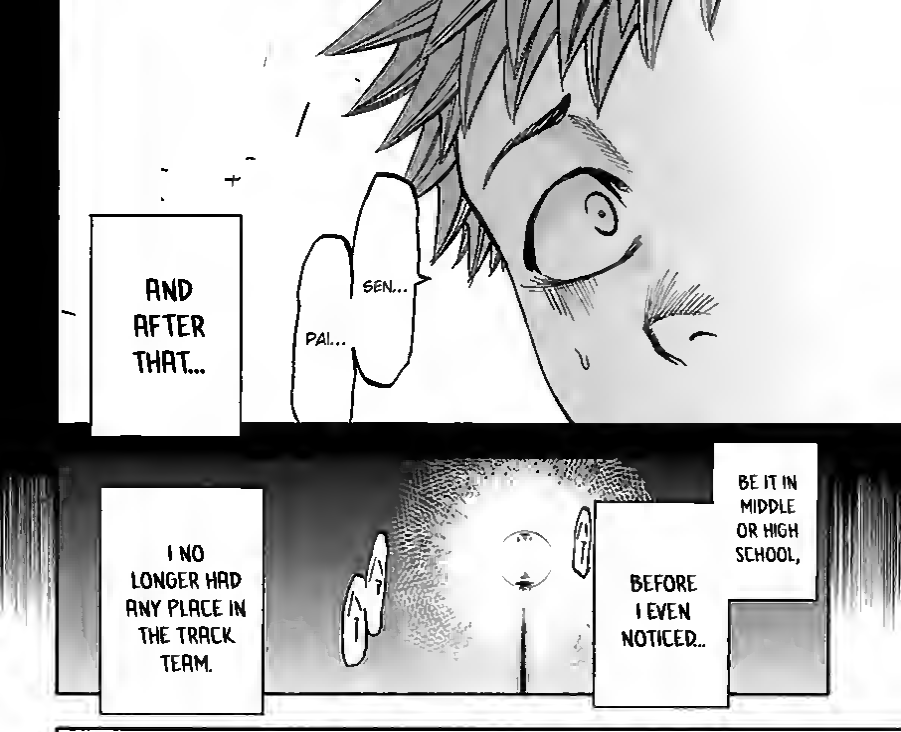
YEAH... RIGHT...?
YOU SHOULD-N'T TAKE ME LIGH...
COMPARED TO HIM, LOOK AT YOU, KOU-CHAN.
YOU SUDDENLY SLOWED DOWN NEAR THE END...
DON'T TELL ME YOU GAVE UP AGAIN?
AAAH!
SHUT UP, WILL YOU!!

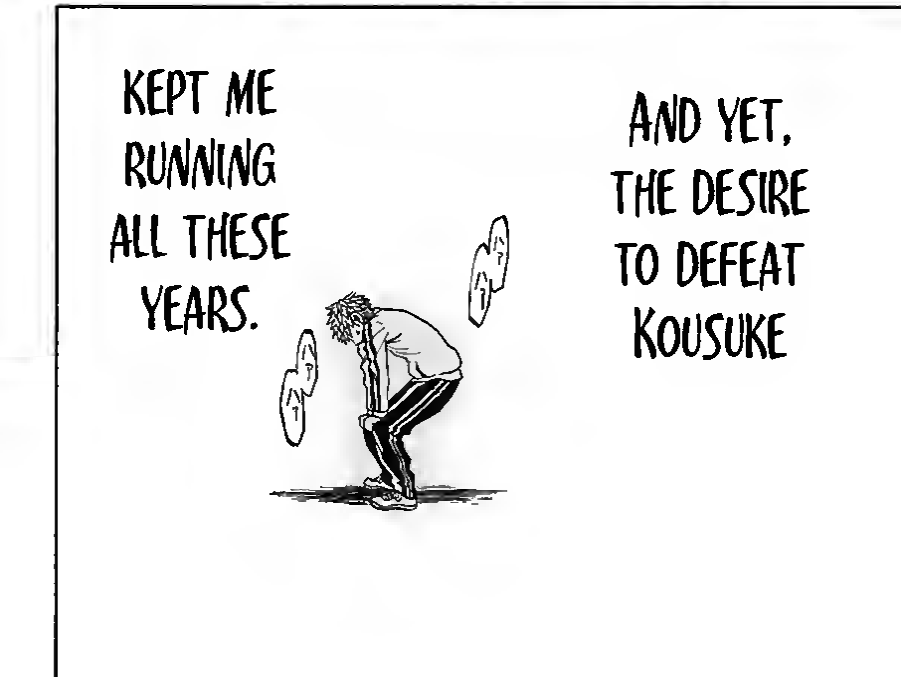
THAT DAY, KOUSUKE WASN'T FEELING WELL...
BUT I ONLY LEARNED THAT
AFTER HE HAD MOVED FROM THE TOWN
AND I HAD ENTERED THE TRACK TEAM IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.
I SEE ...
THE TRACK CLUB, HUH...
IT SEEMS KOU-CHAN HAS CHOSEN THE BASEBALL CLUB OVER THERE
...STOP THIS.

SO WHY DO YOU KEEP BRINGING HIM UP SO HAPPILY?
SHIMA-KOU?
?
KOUSUKE IS NO LONGER HERE.
LOOK AT ME
NOT HIM.
YOU KNOW ...
... NOMIYA ...
NOMIYA... PLEASE LOOK AT ME.
I'M A CANDI-DATE
TO BECOME THE ACE OF THE TRACK TEAM.

HUH?
WHO?
ME... I'M TALKING ABOUT ME!!
HUH?!
WELL DONE, SHIMA-KOU!!
I SEE.
SO YOU'RE GIVING YOUR BEST, HUH!!
...THINKING BACK...

THAT WAS MY FIRST LIE.
...OH.
THE CLUB'S FUTURE ACE, HUH.
SAYS THE GUY WHO CAN'T EVEN KEEP UP WITH OUR TRAINING... RIGHT?
COME NOW.
I'M SURE HE'S GONNA SHOW US HOW A TECHNIQUE WORTHY OF THE TITLE.

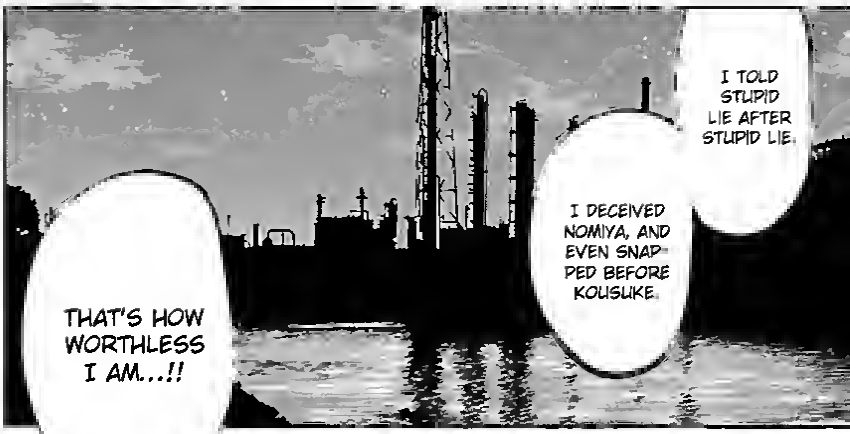

AND AFTER THAT...
SEN...
PAI...
I NO LONGER HAD ANY PLACE IN THE TRACK TEAM.
BEFORE I EVEN NOTICED..
BE IT IN MIDDLE OR HIGH SCHOOL,


KEPT ME RUNNING ALL THESE YEARS.
AND YET, THE DESIRE TO DEFEAT KOUSUKE

...I WONDER WHEN...
I STARTED RUNNING...
AND I CONTINUED TO LIE.
CONSTANTLY, EVERY DAY

ゴゥ…
…OKA?
YOU WON'T LET GO OF ME EITHER, HUH, COMING EVERY DAY.
…SHIMA.
BUT ONLY TO RUN AWAY FROM MY OWN GUILT …!!
NOT TO WIN AGAINST KOUSUKE

HOW LONG WILL THIS GO ON?
IT MAY SOUND POMPOUS, BUT YOU'RE NOT THAT WEAK OF A MAN.
... HA HA.
STOP WITH THE FAKE COMPLI-MENTS, ALREADY.


I TOLD STUPID LIE AFTER STUPID LIE.
I DECEIVED NOMIYA, AND EVEN SNAP-PED BEFORE KOUSUKE.
THAT'S HOW WORTHLESS I AM...!!

... SHIMA ...

HMM, I'VE GOT NO CLUE WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
BUT I HAVE TO AGREE WITH OKAPYON, HERE.
YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT...
A WEAK MAN, SHIMAKOU!!

...IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
SHIMA-KOU!

CHAPTER 13:
IN ORDER TO WIN

I HAVE TO AGREE WITH OKA-PYON.
YOU'RE DEFINITELY NOT A WEAK MAN, SHIMAKOU!!
NOMIYA...!!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN... "I'M NOT WEAK"?
NOMIYA ...
WELL ...
?
WHY...
ARE YOU HERE TOO, NOMIYA ...?!
WHAT KIND OF WEAK MAN...
WOULD TRY SO HARD EVERY SINGLE DAY?
ALL THIS FOR THE TOURNAMENT WITH YOUR CLUB, RIGHT?
.....

.....
THAT'S... A LIE...
.....
SHIMA-KOU?
!!
HEY, SHIMA ...!!
IT'S POINT-LESS, NOW...
THAT'S ENOUGH... I'M TIRED OF THIS
IF I CAN SETTLE SOMETHING BY SPITTING IT OUT...
THEN... IT MIGHT BE BETTER, AFTER ALL ...

NOMIYA ...
IT WAS A LIE... ALL OF IT.
ALL OF IT...!!
I DON'T GO TO THE TRACK CLUB...
I'M NOT EVEN RE-GISTERED FOR THE TOURNA-MENTS.
AND I'M CERTAINTLY NOT THE ACE OF ANYTHING ...
EVERYTHING THAT MADE YOU SMILE...
WAS A LIE ...!!

.....

...SAY, SHIMA-KOU.
CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THING?
...YEAH.

YOU SAID "EVERY-THING"...
BUT YOU ACTUALLY RUN EVERY DAY...
THAT'S NOT A LIE, IS IT?

YOU KNOW, I SEE YOU
RUNNING AROUND HERE, SOMETIMES.
WITH A DETERMINED EXPRESSION YOU NEVER HAVE, NORMALLY.
ALWAYS LOOKING STRAIGHT AHEAD...
SO YOU SEE ...
WHATEVER YOU MIGHT SAY...
EVEN IF YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOING TO THE CLUB
OR RUNNING FOR A TOURNAMENT...

I STILL KNOW YOU'RE WORKING EARNESTLY.
SO I CAN AT LEAST SUPPORT YOU IN THAT!!

IF YOU FEEL GUILTY FOR LYING TO US...
TRUST ME, YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
YOU SURELY HAD YOUR REASONS, RIGHT?
THEN... I'M OKAY WITH IT.
I'M... AN IDIOT.
I KNEW THAT NOMIYA WAS THIS KIND OF GIRL.
THAT'S THE VERY REASON
I FELL IN LOVE WITH HER IN THE FIRST PLACE.

SHIMAKOU.
ARE YOU GONNA DIE IF YOU DON'T EAT DONUTS ...?
NOMI-YA...
AH!
MY STOCK OF DONUTS HAS RUN OUT!!
I must buy some quickly
HURRY UP AND MAKE UP WITH KOU-CHAN, OKAY?
IT'S SO MUCH MORE FUN WHEN ALL OF US ARE TO-GETHER!!

...I'M SURE...
NOMIYA HAD ALREADY REALIZED IT.
BOTH YOUR LIES ...
AND YOUR ISSUE WITH SAKURA KOU-SUKE.
YET SHE NEVER LA-MENTED IT, NOR SPOKE UP. SHE JUST OB-SERVED.
THAT MAY BE... WHAT YOU CALL "TRUST", I GUESS.
...THOUGH SHE CAN NO LONGER PRETEND SHE DOESN'T KNOW, NOW.
Hey!
Shi-shi

...BY THE WAY, SHIMA.
SAKURA KOUSUKE TOLD ME THE SAME THING.
"SHIMA SURELY HAS A GOOD REASON FOR LYING".
...SHIMA, I'LL SAY IT ONCE MORE.
HOW LONG DO PLAN TO KEEP THIS UP?
YOU'VE STRUGGLED ENOUGH, ALREADY.
YOU'VE SUFFERED MORE THAN ENOUGH.

IT'S TIME TO SHOW KOUSUKE
WHAT YOU'VE USED THE LAST FOUR YEARS FOR.

THIS WAY YOU CAN COME TO TERMS WITH YOUR JEALOUSY FOR KOUSUKE
AND WITH YOUR FEELINGS FOR NOMIYA.
DON'T YOU THINK?
I'VE WATCHED OVER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE ALL THIS TIME.
HOW YOU'VE KEPT RUNNING AFTER KOUSUKE'S BACK.

AND, EVEN AFTER HE TRANS-FERED,
HOW YOU'VE KEPT STRUGGLING TO CATCH UP WITH HIM.
YOU'RE "RUNNING AWAY FROM YOUR OWN GUILT"?
I HAVE TO DENY THAT CLAIM.
NO ONE BET-TER THAN I, KNOWS WHAT YOU'VE DONE THESE LAST FOUR YEARS.

WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP RUNNING DURING ALL THESE YEARS?
GH……
I WANT …
SAY IT ALOUD !!
SAKU-RAJIMA YUUTA!!

EVEN JUST ONCE ...
KOU-SUKE!
LET'S HAVE A DUEL!!
I WANT TO WIN AGAINST KOUSUKE!!
PLEASE LET ME SHOW YOU WITH ALL MY STR-ENGTH
WHY I LIED TO YOU AND NOMIYA!!

...
MEBUKI.
DO THESE LOOK LIKE THE EYES A MAN RUNNING AWAY, TO YOU?
...
I SEE.
..."WE'RE GONNA RUN ALONGSIDE THE RIVER BANK."
"THE FIRST ONE TO REACH NAGISA PARK WINS"... RIGHT?

THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID
THE LAST TIME YOU CHALLENGED ME.
YOU WERE TAKING THIS DEAD SERIOUSLY, BACK THEN...
AND YOU HAVE THE EXACT SAME LOOK, RIGHT NOW.
... YEAH.

BUT THIS TIME
I HAVE NO INTENTION TO LOSE!!

CHAPTER 14: ANSWER

MY FOUR YEARS OF RUNNING RELENTLESSLY.

MY FEELINGS FOR NOMIYA.

MY JEALOUSY TOWARD KOUSUKE.

Chapter 14: Answer

...SAY, OKA.
WHICH ONE DO YOU THINK IS GONNA WIN?
SUMI-YOSHI.
IT DOESN'T MATTER.. WHO WINS OR LOSES THIS RACE.
... OKA?

BUT THE ISSUE IS ELSE-WHERE.
TO SHIMA, KOUSUKE IS A SYMBOL.
HE'S THE PERSON HE WANTED TO BECOME.

SHIMA SAID HE WANTED TO DEFEAT KOUSUKE.
AND I DON'T THINK HE WAS LYING.

IN OTHER WORDS...
THE ONE SHIMA IS REALLY TRYING TO DEFEAT...
ハッ
ハッ
ハッ
...YOU'RE NOT HALF-BAD...
SHI-MA!
IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY TO TALK... THEN USE IT TO RUN!
KOU-SUKE!
ゼッ
ゼッ
ハッ
ハッ
ハッ
ハッ

OR WHAT, MAYBE ...
YOU WERE GIVING UP?!
WHAD-DYA SAY?!
DON'T FUCK WITH ME...
I'M NOT GIVING UP ANYTIME SOON!!
OH YEAH ...
BUT DON'T THINK I'M ANY DIFFE-RENT...

I'M DEFINI-TELY
NOT GIVING UP EITHER!!
KOUSUKE
YOU KNOW.. ACTUALLY...
I DON'T HAVE ANY ILLUSIONS.

I KNOW THAT EVEN IF I BEAT YOU...
NOMIYA WON'T LOOK AT ME ANY MORE THAN BEFORE.
I DIDN'T WANT TO ACCEPT IT.
I WAS UNABLE TO ACCEPT IT.
SO I RAN EVERY DAY IN A DESPERATE STRUGGLE.
ハァ…
ハァ…

I FULLY KNOW THAT THE ONE I COULDN'T ACKNOWLEDGE WAS MYSELF, AND NO ONE ELSE.

I WAS INCREDIBLY HAPPY.

THE FACT THAT, DESPITE ALL THAT, WHEN YOU CAME BACK TO THIS TOWN...

WAS THE
MAN NAMED
SAKURAJIMA
YUUTA.

YO!
KOU-CHAN, YOU SLICK.
...NAH. CHILL OUT. IT WAS A JOKE.

AFTER ALL, I THINK
YOU FOUGHT SERIOUSLY TO THE END, RIGHT?
...I JUST LOST, PERIOD.
TELL ME THAT I SUCK ALL YOU WANT!!

OH? I CAN, REALLY? THEN ALLOW ME TO.
YOU SUCK!
UGH!
HAHA! IT'S REALLY LIKE YOU TO TAKE DAMAGE EVEN THOUGH YOU ACT TOUGH ...
YEP, YOU SUCK.
NWAH...

You're telling me to lose even more water...?
KOUSUKE!
WAIT, THAT'S THE RE-FRESH-MENT?!
OH, THANKS.
OH, RIGHT, REFRESH-MENTS FOR YOU TWO!!
I'LL GO BACK TO PICK UP SHISHI AND OKAPYON!!

I'M SORRY!!
YOU HADN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG...
I MAY HAVE SAID THAT I HATED YOU...
BUT...
YOU'RE ACTUALLY STILL A FRIEND TO ME...
...YOU KNOW, SHIMA ...
I'M GLAD I ACCEPTED YOUR CHALLENGE.

YOU'VE BEEN RUNNING SERIOUSLY THESE LAST FOUR YEARS.
THAT PART WASN'T A LIE.
SO YOU SEE... I'M NOT SURE
HOW MUCH OF YOUR MES-SAGE GOT THROUGH TO ME, BUT...
AT ANY RATE, I'M REALLY PROUD
TO BE FRIENDS WITH SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

DURING THESE FOUR YEARS.
I'VE SUFFERED SO MUCH
REALLY...
I COULDN'T EVEN FIND A PROPER SLEEP.
AS IF I WAS AFRAID OF MY JEALOUSY
AND OF MY SELF-HATRED.
I CURLED UP AND TREMBLED.

HOW-EVER..
STILL, SHIMA-KOU!!
I CAN'T EXACTLY SAY I'M SURPRI-SED, BUT ...
YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD!!
TODAY, FINALLY...

I FEEL LIKE I CAN PUFF OUT MY CHEST
AND FIND SOME SLEEP.
OF COUR-SE.
YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE ME LIGHTLY!

.....
GEH.
WHAT KIND OF REACTION IS THAT?
SHIMA, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF TACT?
DAMN, I'M JUST UNCOMFORTABLE WITH SUMIYOSHI.
Whew
Why are you still playing along with this farce?
I'M PRETTY SURE SHE WAS REFERRING TO ME, THERE...

CHAPTER 15: A FUSS ABOUT LOVE

HUU-UUH?!
OKA, DAMN YOU...
HUUUH?!
Huh?! Really?!
...HIS TONGUE KINDA SLIPPED, I THINK.
HE WAS COVERED IN COLD SWEAT AFTER THAT.
OKA...
HOW COULD YOU...
But that's so like him...
SO?
HOW WAS IT?
HM?
DID RUNNING WITH SAKURA KOUSUKE
CHANGE ANYTHING?

I STILL LOVE NOMIYA AS MUCH AS BEFORE.
AND... WELL...
I'M STILL AS JEALOUS OF KOUSUKE.
... NOT A THING, HONESTLY.
.....
I SEE.
BUT...
I FEEL RELIEVED, NOW.

THANKS TO THAT...
I MAY NOT HATE MYSELF QUITE AS MUCH.
WELL, I GUESS I CAN SAY
IT'S ALL THANKS TO KOUSUKE.
SAKURA KOUSUKE ...
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO MEET ANOTHER IDIOT OF NOMIYA'S CALIBER.

...NOMIYA ALWAYS SAYS THAT HE TENDS TO GIVE UP EASILY.
BUT IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SERIOUS ABOUT EVERYTHING.
HE GETS SERIOUSLY DEPRESSED, AND SERIOUSLY ANXIOUS.
SERIOUS AND DEDICATED ABOUT ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING.
ONLY ABLE TO RUN STRAIGHT AHEAD ONCE HE'S DECIDED ON SOMETHING.
THAT'S WHY, ONCE HE'S GOTTEN BACK ON HIS FEET,
HE RUSHES STRAIGHT TO HIS GOAL.
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN THAT AWKWARD KIND OF GUY.

GOOD GRIEF... I ALMOST PITY YOU, SHIMA.
HAVING SUCH A MAN AS A RIVAL ...
Oh, here it was.
HM? WAIT, WHY ARE TALKING SO NON-CHALANTLY ABOUT IT?
YOU'RE NOT MUCH BETTER OFF WITH NOMIYA AS A RIVAL.
...I'M SORRY, SHIMA.
I'VE SUDDENLY LOST TRACK OF WHAT YOU MEAN.
HM?
WELL, I MEAN ...

SUMI-YOSHI...
YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH KOUSUKE, AREN'T YOU?
SHIMA...
EVEN NOW, YOU SOUND ALL JOYFUL TALKING ABOUT HIM.
IT WAS PRETTY OBVIOUS DURING THE BA-SEBALL TRAINING FUSS.

WHAT IN HELL ARE YOU BLABBERING ABOUT, LAWN-HEAD?
SPEW OUT ONE MORE STUPID WORD LIKE THAT
CAN THAT BRAIN OF YOURS ONLY COMPUTE SUCH VULGAR IDEAS?
AND I'LL PERSONALLY MOW THAT LAWN.

... WELL, I AM GRATEFUL TO HIM
I CAN ONLY SAY THAT NOW, BUT I MADE UP WITH NOMIYA THANKS TO HIM

... THAT WAS A JOKE!
I WAS JUST KIDDING COME ON!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHA
はっはっはっはっはっ
BY THE WAY, IF WE TALK ABOUT NOMIYA...
PERSONALLY, RATHER THAN SAKURA KOUSUKE, IT'S OKA THAT I FIND SUSPICIOUS.
HUH? OKA?
NAH, THAT'S A BIT TOO...
はっはっ
……
HUH?
HUH?
HUUUUH?!
HMPF.
TOO EASY.
Fu fu fu
SU-SU-SU-
SUMI-YOSHI!
KYA?!

WHERE?! WHERE IS HE SUSPICIOUS?!
TELL ME MORE ABOUT IT!! WHAT'S SO STRANGE ABOUT OKA?!
CO... COOL YOUR HEAD, STUPID!!
I WAS JOKING! IT WAS A JOKE ...
ガラララ...

スタ スタ スタスタスタス

ガラララ
スタスタスタ
... ERR ...
SUMI-YOSHI?

YOU FACE IS A PRETTY DEEP RED, RIGHT NOW, YOU KNOW?

AND WHOSE ...
WHOSE FAULT DO YOU THINK THIS IS?!
GH, HEY, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
I KICKED SOMETHING WEIRD, TO BOOT!!
YOU'RE DESPICABLE!
OH...
KOUSUKE... I'M GLAD YOU'RE BACK...
!?
NAH
JUST KIDDING...

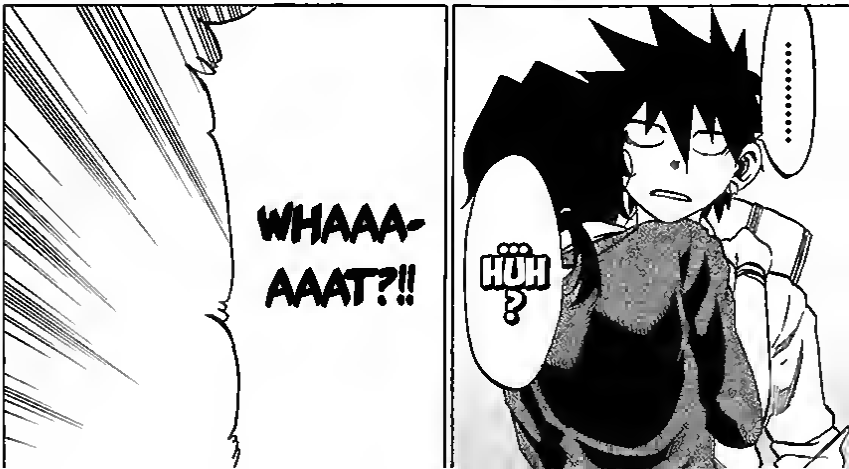
SHIMA!! I THINK IT'S HIGH TIME WE REMOVE THE WEED GROWING ON YOUR HEAD!!
WHAT DO YOU PREFER?! SHOULD I PLUCK IT OFF, OR...
HUH... WAIT?! SUMIYOSHI, SCISSORS ARE DANGEROUS...
UWOOOOOH?!!
HMM.. SO SHIMA AND SUMIYOSHI WERE THAT CLOSE?
... ALTHOUGH IT'S SHIMA WHO SEEMED TO BE ON THE OFFENSIVE.
Hmm..
MAYBE I SHOULD ASK OKA HOW WE CAN SUPPORT THEM...
...OH?
YOU'VE SUDDENLY STOPPED

WHICH MEANS
YOU'VE ALREADY NOTICED ME. WHAT A SHAME.
♡

MEBUKI.
DO YOU REMEMBER?
WHAT YOU SAID ON THE ROOFTOP...
アア
"DO YOU THINK SOMETHING ALREADY OVER...
"SOMETHING ALREADY BROKEN CAN BE REBUILT FROM SCRATCH?"
"I WOULD BE CURIOUS TO KNOW."
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU PERCEIVED IT...
BUT I'VE MANAGED TO START OVER WITH SHIMA.
... HOWEVER ...

I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GONNA FIND THE ANSWER YOU'RE LOO-KING FOR
BY JUST OBSERVING FROM ABOVE, AM I RIGHT?
OH NO.
THERE'S ONE THING I'VE UN-DERSTOOD VERY WELL.

It's that I am in love with you.
So please GO out with me.


WHAAA-AAAT?!!
HÜH?
.....

SAY ...
ISN'T KOU-CHAN OFTEN LOST IN HIS THOUGHTS, LATELY?
YEAH, HE ONLY ANSWERS "AH..." LIKE AN RPG VILLAGER...
Over and over
OH, YOU WERE HERE, SHIMA?
OF COURSE I WAS!!
!!!
!!
...ME-BUKI ...?!
WHAT IS SHE PLOTTING AGAIN...
'SUP, KOU-SUKE.
HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT I SAID?
CHAPTER 16: POLAR OPPOSITES

YOU KNOW, "I LOVE YOU...
PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME".
CHAPTER 16: POLAR OPPOSITES

AH... SORRY... REALLY...
I'M STILL THINKING ABOUT IT... SORRY...
IS THAT SO.
THEN, SINCE THERE'S NO SCHOOL TOMOR-ROW...
HOW ABOUT WE GO ON A DATE?
HUH ?!
IT MIGHT HELP YOU
TO FIND AN ANSWER, RIGHT?
OKAY, I'LL BE WAITING AT 2PM AT THE SEOMI STATION.
HEY... MEBUKI !!
WELL, WHETHER YOU COME OR NOT IS UP TO YOU.
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL COME! H... HEY!
YEAH, I SAID IT WAS FINE.

EmliyMart
AND I ACTUALLY CAME, DAMNIT...
OH? SO YOU DID COME?
HUH ?!
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU'D BE WAITING!!
HA HA HA
YOU'RE SO UP-RIGHT.

OR, WHAT ...
DOES THAT MEAN I'VE GOT A SHOT?
AH.
ERR, NO... I STILL HAVEN'T COME UP WITH AN ANSWER, SO I'M NOT SURE WHY...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER RIGHT AWAY.
OH WELL, NO NEED TO BE SO STIFF ABOUT IT.
LET'S JUST ENJOY OURSELVES FOR NOW!!
H... HEY, MEBUKI...
WAIT!! WAIT, I TELL YOU!!

SPEAKING OF IT...
HAVE YOU EVEN THOUGHT OF WHERE WE'RE GONNA GO?
...KOU-SUKE.
WANNA TRY MY BOOTS ON?
...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
ANYWAY, LET'S GO TO SOME PLACES THAT CATCH OUR EYES
CHIBI-SUKE.
SHUT UP!! I'M STILL GROWING UP!!

"HUM...
"INCREDIBLE!!"
うーん…
55
スゴイ!!
98
HOW'S IT GOING?
...SO?

HOW'S IT GOING, NOMIYA?
...I SEE, YOU'VE DECIDED TO IGNORE ME.
Where have your objections gone?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HOW?
YOU LOOK PRETTY PUMPED UP TO ME, SUMIYOSHI...

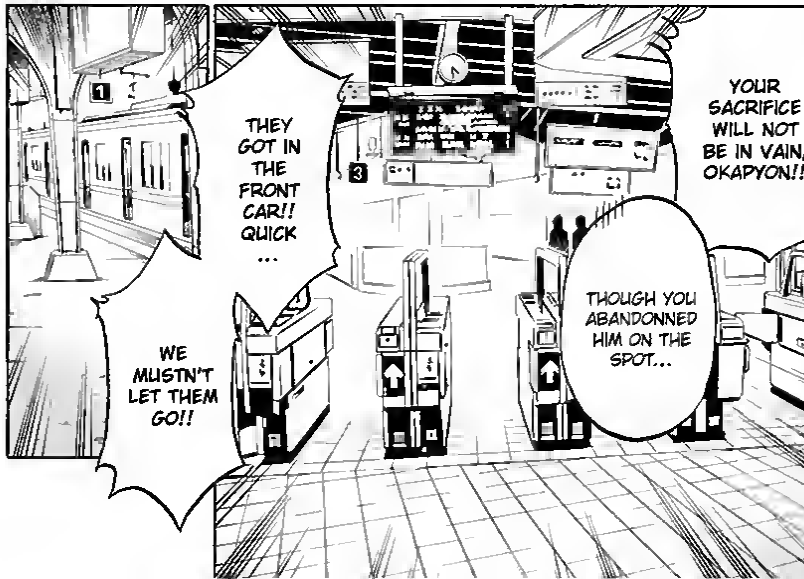
...YOU'RE RIGHT, THE OUTFIT IS CRUCIAL.
Is that Oka?
YOUR OUTFIT ISN'T REALLY SUITED FOR TAILING, TO BEGIN WITH.
WE'LL BE FOUND OUT IF WE GET UP.
STAY DOWN, SHISHI!!

...WELL, TAKAKI IS PLAYING AT A FRIEND'S PLACE.
AND PEOPLE WOULD ONLY WORRY IF I SPENT THE ENTIRE DAY WITH MOM AT THE HOSPITAL...
I WAS KINDA SURPRISED, THOUGH.
I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D TAKE PART IN THIS STUFF, SHISHI.

...HOW BOORISH OF HIM, THOUGH.
DON'T JUST FLIRT WITH BUKKI WHEN YOU ALREADY HAVE SHISHI, KOU-CHAN...
SORRY ?!
AND YOU KNOW, WE DON'T HAVE A LOT OF HOMEWORK, THIS WEEK, SO..
Hai,
...HOW ABOUT YOU JUST ADMIT THAT YOU WERE CU-RIOUS?
...HM? I THINK I HEARD SOME NOISE OVER THERE..
RIGHT, PLEASE JUST IGNORE THE NOISE.
...ERR, NOMIYA?
HM? WHAT, SHISHI?
THERE SEEMS TO BE AN AWFUL MISUNDER-STANDING, SO...
LET ME SET THIS STRAIGHT...
.....

!!
THEY'RE MOVING!! TOWARD THE STATION!!
OKAY.
PLEASE DON'T MOVE.

FLIRT WITH HER.. YOU SAY...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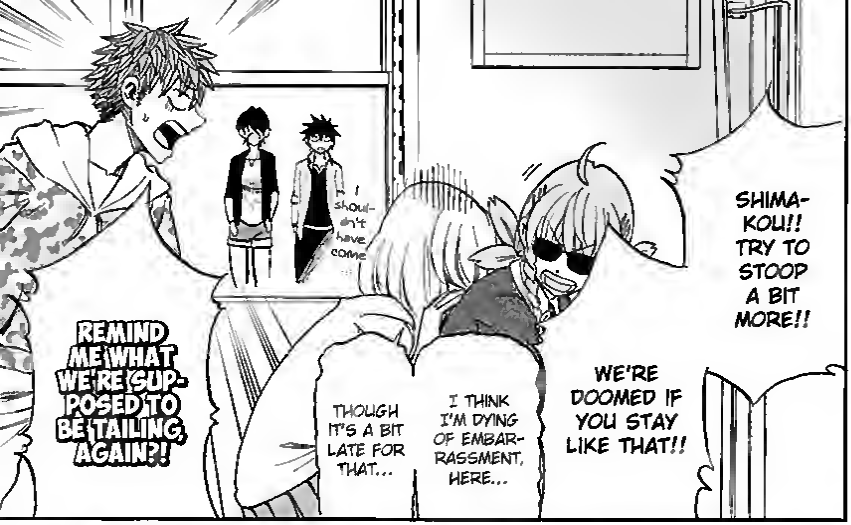
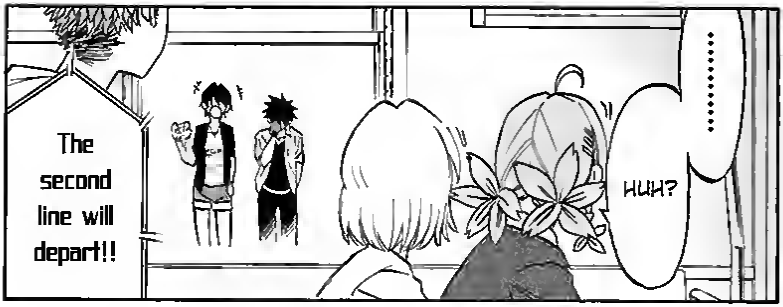
THEY GOT IN THE FRONT CAR!! QUICK ...
WE MUSTN'T LET THEM GO!!
YOUR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE IN VAIN, OKAPYON!!
THOUGH YOU ABANDONNED HIM ON THE SPOT...

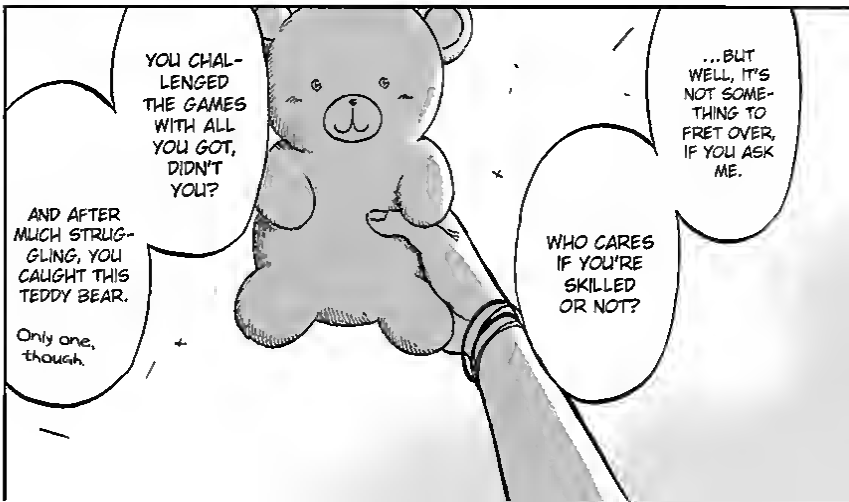

SHIMA-KOU!! TRY TO STOOP A BIT MORE!!
WE'RE DOOMED IF YOU STAY LIKE THAT!!
I THINK I'M DYING OF EMBARRASSMENT, HERE...
THOUGH IT'S A BIT LATE FOR THAT...
I should've n't have come
REMIND ME WHAT WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE TAILING, AGAIN?!


HUH?
.....
The second line will depart!!

AAAAA-AAAAA-AAAAAH
ガタン
ゴトン
HOW STUPID ARE THEY?

THAT SURE WAS A MASTER-PIECE.
SHOULD WE BOLDLY WAIT FOR THEM TO COME BACK?
Is he gonna be fine?
THE POOR OKA WAS CAUGHT BY THE POLICE TOO.

OR MAYBE YOU JUST SUCK AT THIS, WHO KNOWS.
GH!!
NAH, I'M JACK OF ALL TRADES.
...YOU'RE QUITE GIF-TED THOUGH, MEBUKI.
Karaoke, bowling.
I'VE UNDER-STOOD THAT WELL ENOUGH, BY NOW.


YOU CHAL-LENGED THE GAMES WITH ALL YOU GOT, DIDN'T YOU?
AND AFTER MUCH STRUG-GLING, YOU CAUGHT THIS TEDDY BEAR.
Only one, though.
...BUT WELL, IT'S NOT SOME-THING TO FRET OVER, IF YOU ASK ME.
WHO CARES IF YOU'RE SKILLED OR NOT?

AND I GUESS DURING THE WHOLE DAY...
YOU WRACKED YOUR BRAINS TO REPLY TO MY CONFESSION, RIGHT?
...ABOUT THAT, MEBUKI.
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH...
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT AS SERIOUSLY AS I COULD, AND...
KOUSUKE.

YOU FELL FOR IT!

MEBUKI, HOW COULD YOU!!
WAH...
YOU'RE HORRIBLE!! YOU'RE A DEMON!!
OH, COME ON, DON'T BE SO HARSH.
AREN'T YOU RELIEVED THAT IT WAS A PRANK?
IT'S ALWAYS PAINFUL TO REJECT SOMEONE, RIGHT?

IT'S VERY NOBLE OF YOU TO THINK ABOUT IT SO SERIOUSLY.
BUT IN THE END, YOU'D HAVE BEEN THE ONLY ONE WITH LESS REGRETS, DON'T YOU THINK?
OH, BUT COULD IT BE THAT YOU WERE ACTUALLY INTERESTED?
...ME-BUKI?
YEAH, THAT WOULD MAKE SENSE.
... I SEE... YOU'RE SO RIGHT, SORRY ...
MAYBE I'M NO BETTER, AFTER ALL...
HM? AH ..
COME ON, I TOLD YOU IT WAS A JOKE.

SAKURA KOUSUKE, WHO TAKES EVERYTHING WAY TOO SERIOUSLY...
AND MEBUKI SAKURA, WHO CAN'T TAKE ANYTHING SERIOUSLY.
AREN'T WE THE PERFECT POLAR OPPOSITES?
RIGHT, MAYBE YOU HAVE AN ANSWER.
THAT QUESTION HAS BEEN TORTURING ME FOR A WHILE.
WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING ...

NO DREAMS, NO HOPE,
NO DES-PAIR,
NO LOVE, NO FRIEND-SHIP, NO SYMPATHY,
NO GRATI-TUDE, NO DIS-APPOINT-MENT,
NO PRIDE, NO FRUS-TRATION, NO RE-GRETS,
NO JEALOUSY, NO HATRED, NO GUILT,
NO ANGER, NO SOR-ROW, NO JOY...
WHEN YOU FEEL ABSOLU-TELY NO-THING...
HOW ARE YOU SUP-POSED TO FIGHT BO-REDOM?

I THOUGHT THAT I COULDN'T GRASP HER CHARACTER, BUT...
...I SEE...
"MEBUKI SAKURA"...
SEE?
FROM THE START...
THERE WAS NOTHING TO GRASP...
POLAR OPPOSITES, I TELL YOU.

STAFF.

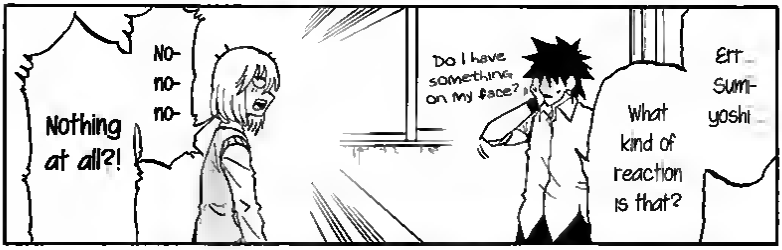
- AKUSHI-SAN
- SHIGE-EDA YOSHIO-SAN
- SHUUMEIGIKU-SAN
- SUZUKI SEIJUN-SAN

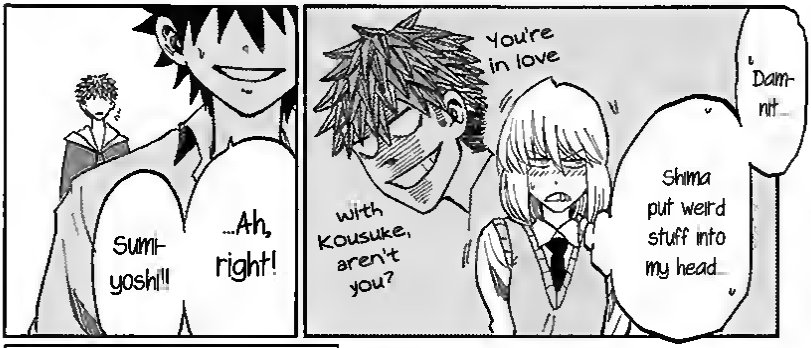
EDITOR: TAKEGAWA-SAN

THANKS TO ALL OF YOU,
WHO BOUGHT THIS BOOK.

LIKE THE "SAKURAS", I AM STILL IMMATURE, BUT PLEASE WATCH WARMLY OVER THEM!!

MASUDA EIJI





CHAPTER 15.5: AFTER "A FUSS ABOUT LOVE"

Don't worry about what happened with Shima in the classroom
I won't tell anyone about it
What?
Well... How can I say it...
If you're fine with me...
You can ask me for advice whenever you want!!
Later!!
Hum...
I'm sorry, Sumyoshi
They sure are close...
AAAAAAAAAA
End